







# JUNE ISSUE

## WHO WE ARE

The Asian Art Society features an online catalogue every month listing quality works of Asian art that have been thoroughly vetted by our select members, who are the in-house experts.

By bringing together a group of trusted dealers specializing in Asian art, our platform offers a unique collection of works of art that collectors will not find anywhere else online. To ensure the highest standards, gallery membership is by invitation only and determined by a selection committee of influential gallerists.

  /AsianArtSociety

**Cover Image:** Detail of a painted saddle. presented by Kapoor Gallery on p.18

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**SALE**

# **JUNE ARTWORKS**

Pieces are published and changed each month. The objects are presented with a full description and corresponding dealers contact information. Unlike auction sites or other platforms, we empower collectors to interact directly with the member dealers for enquiries and purchases by clicking on the e-mail address.

In order to guarantee the quality of pieces available in the catalogues, objects are systematically validated by all our select members, who are the in-house experts. Collectors are therefore encouraged to decide and buy with complete confidence. In addition to this the Asian Art Society proposes a seven-day full money back return policy should the buyer not feel totally satisfied with a purchase. Items are presented by categories please check the table of contents.

Feel free to ask the price if the artwork is listed with a price on request.



01

**JADE PEBBLE-FORM  
MYTHICAL BEAST**

China

Ming Dynasty

16 to 17th century

Fitted *zitan* stand

Width: 6,7 cm

Provenance:

Private English collection, purchased  
in the 1950s

Price on request

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

Rasti Fine Art Ltd.

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# 02

## HUNTING SCENE

Paiwan  
Taiwan  
First half of the 20th century  
Wood  
29 cm x 52 cm x 12,5 cm  
Provenance:  
Pre-War Japanese collection  
Price: 3.500 USD

This sculpture group presents a narrative of an ancestral hunter with his dogs going after a pair of wild pigs, with the Paiwan totemic serpent circling along the base on both sides... Indigenous Taiwan tribes tended to sculpt more in a flat surface manner...on boats, beams, etc. Sculptures in the round like this are very uncommon.

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03

**SPOON WITH  
GENEALOGICAL  
DIAGRAM**

Paiwan

Taiwan

Wood

23,8 cm x 4,8 cm x 7,6 cm

Provenance:

Pre-War Japanese collection

Price: 1.500 USD

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# O4

## PAINTED SADDLE

Tibet

15th–17th century

Gilt and varnished wood and leather,  
with gilt-iron frames

61 cm x 35,6 cm

Provenance:

Private English collection, by repute

Publication:

Himalayan Art Resources

(himalayanart.org), item no. 7504.

Price on request

### OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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The present saddle's wooden frame, or saddletree, is richly decorated with gilded and varnished leather panels on the arched front plate (pommel) and rear plate (cantle). The sideboards are equipped with end-board extensions that adjoin the leather varnished panels which are strengthened with iron frames adorned with gold and silver foliate scrollwork. Both pommel and cantle are decorated with dense scrolling foliage with repeated lotus blooms on the top register, and a wish-fulfilling jewel on a lotus base flanked by a pair of makara dragons on the lower. On both panels, the two registers are separated by a solid gold line on a raised central rib—the pommel, however, also includes a third, lower register, separated by a gilt-iron arch and decorated again with scrolling lotus blooms.

This saddle's floral arrangements can be compared to a 17th-century Tibetan wooden box from a private collection that is illustrated in *Wooden Wonders: Tibetan Furniture in Secular and Religious Life* (Kamansky, 2004, p.64, cat. no.241), as well as those published in *Warriors of the Himalayas: Rediscovering the Arms and Armour of Tibet* (La Rocca, 2006, P.105, cat. no. 30). The latter exhibits the same lacquer-like effect, formed by layers of pigmented shellac followed by the gold leaf designs, another layer of shellac, and a final coat of tung oil glaze.

This scarce Tibetan saddle, with its highly decorative gilded and varnished leather panels, is attached to a wooden frame called a saddletree. The front plate (the pommel) and the rear plate (the cantle) are both arch-shaped and connected by a pair of sideboards that have end-board extensions. These extensions are decorated with en-suite leather varnished







panels. For strength, these panels are bordered with iron frames chased with gold and silver foliate scrollwork in a typical Tibetan fashion. The largest panel, the pommel, consists of an outer leather area with an iron trim and a central, raised rib. A smaller leather section sits below this, bordered top and bottom with further iron arches. The cantle is of similar construction, but has a single piece of leather with a raised central rib—it too is bordered with wide, iron arches.

Dense sprays of lush, leafy stems and blossoms frame a central, flaming wish-fulfilling jewel that sits on a lotus base and is flanked by a pair of Makara dragons. All is beautifully, expertly painted in gold and set against a red background. The cantle also has the same decoration and, in my opinion, shows an even better pair of dragons, done so expertly it would rival any figural painting executed on Tibetan leather armour. The floral arrangements and generally naturalistic style of painting are similar to a 17th century Tibetan wooden box from a private collection that is illustrated in the book *Wooden Wonders: Tibetan Furniture in Secular and Religious Life* (1).

The collection of Tibetan leather armour in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and those published in Don La Rocca's 2006 book *Warriors of the Himalayas* cannot be overlooked, as this saddle shows the same themes and patterns. La Rocca (2) explains that the lacquer-like effect appears to consist of a base layer or layers of pigmented shellac, with the gold designs in gold leaf, and then a further layer of shellac upon which the details are painted in fine black lines, finally to be complemented by a coat of tung oil glaze.















05

## RITUAL SKULL MASK

Tibet or Nepal

19th century

Gilt bronze with polychrome painting and gilding. Partly encrusted red and black patina  
24 cm (h.) x 26 cm (w.) x 6 cm (D.)

Provenance:

Private collection, Switzerland

Price on request

### OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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This striking mask depicts a skull face with high cheek bones and gaping eyes, his mouth is formed in a grimace. It is surrounded by flames or energetic curls, serving as a powerful symbol in Tantric Buddhism. Such masks were used during Chöd ceremonies and ritual dances to emphasize the impermanence of life and to overcome ego-based illusions. The ornate flame or swirl motifs surrounding the head signify spiritual power or transformation.

They are used in rituals symbolizing the transition to wisdom and are often found as part of the attributes of tantric guardian deities such as Mahakala, Yama or Citipati, aimed at dispelling demons or providing protection.

The skull represents transformation, the triumph over death, and the illusion of the ego.

It is gilded and partially polychromed with traces of red and black pigments still visible, and the reverse side shows a dark patina, characteristic of ritual objects that have seen prolonged use. The gilded finish and red accents enhance the sacred power of the object.

Chöd practice is an esoteric tantric discipline within Tibetan Buddhism, aimed at radically cutting through the ego and attachment. It is one of the most fascinating, mystical, and symbolically rich rituals in Vajrayāna Buddhism.



















06

**CARVED WOOD MASK  
OF BHAIRAVA**

Nepal

15th-17th century

Wood, traces of pigment

Height: 26 cm

Provenance:

Property from the collection of Helen  
Cunningham and Ted Newbold,  
acquired from Jaipaul Galleries Inc.,  
Philadelphia, August 6, 1990

Publication:

Himalayan Art Resources  
(himalayanart.org), item no. 7534  
Price on request

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

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This striking carved wood mask represents Bhairava, a popular wrathful deity who is a manifestation of Shiva, the god of destruction and transformation. Bhairava is worshipped by both Hindus and Buddhists and can be seen in many temples across South Asia, especially in Kathmandu Valley, Nepal. The mask, dating between the 15th and 17th centuries, is a fine example of the artistic and ritualistic craftsmanship of Nepalese artisans. With its fierce expression, bulging eyes, furrowed brows, and an open mouth displaying two lower fangs—possibly for the insertion of ritual substances or offerings—the sculpture embodies Bhairava's role as a guardian deity and protector against malevolent forces.

Carved from wood with traces of original pigment, the masks may have been used in festivals, temple rituals, or as a form of protection. Flaming hair and floral elements with small figures decorate the elaborate headdress around his face. The weathered surface and curved edges of the mask seem to point towards centuries of use, adding to its historical depth and spiritual significance as a relic of tradition.

For comparison, reference another 17th century Nepalese Bhairava mask of brass: see Pratapaditya Pal et al, "A collecting Odyssey, Indian, Himalayan and Southeast Asian Art from the James and Marilyn Alsdorf collection", New York, 1997, p. 29, no. 25.











07

## AN OPENWORK COPPER ALLOY GARMENT PIN

Eastern Iran or Central Asia

2000 BC

Superb colour and patina, bronze

Width: 35 cm

Provenance:

John Kasmin

Oliver Hoare Ltd

Private collection

Price on request

### OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Finch & Co

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A similar pin in the Louvre-France, was exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum's 'Art of the First Cities' exhibition in 2003 (no. 228). The catalogue entry records that while Pierre Amiet believes the couple are engaged in flirtatious banter, Victor Sarianidi thinks it represents the transmission of a 'revelation' from one individual to another. Not that one precludes the other, of course.

The Louvre pin shows the couple beneath a curved lintel, while this example has an elaborate surround; a phallic symbol between recumbent lions below; a wriggling serpent rising on each side; and a balcony above the lintel.

















08

**A PAIR OF ENAMELLED  
DROP EARRINGS**

Iran  
Qajar dynasty  
19th century  
Length: 7 cm  
Price on request

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

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09

## OWL ON A TREE STUMP

Japan

Meiji era (1868-1912)

Bronze

37 cm (h.) x 24 cm (w.) x 17 cm (d.)

Price on request

Bronze sculpture representing an owl on a tree stump covered with ivy. The owl, detachable from its base, has *shakudo* eyes. It is certainly an Ryûkyû scops owl (*Otus elegans*), present in the south of Japan in Ryûkyû Islands.

Red fabric glued to the base of the trunk to protect the base and the pedestal (not original).

The owl (*fukurô*, 梟) symbolizes good luck and protection from hardship. By homonymy, *fukuro* mean « good fortune coming » (福来郎) or « without difficulties » (不苦労). Furthermore, being able to see in the dark, it is famous to have great wisdom and the power to predict the future.

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10

**MINITATURE RANKAKU  
TEA HOUSE**

Japan

Meiji era (1868-1912)

19 cm (h.) x 14 cm (w.) x 10 cm (d.)

Provenance:

Maria Pergay

Price on request

Miniature tea house with a crane and bamboo motif in black and gold *takamaki-e* lacquer on a *rankaku* (eggshell inlay) base. It has several compartments and trays on the roof, walls and base. Walls opening in the center with a pewter clasp.

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# 11

## A GILT-WOOD FIGURE OF AMIDA BUDDHA SEATED IN KEKKA FUZA (LOTUS POSITION) THE HANDS IN JŌ-IN (MEDITATION MUDRA)

Japan

Muromachi period

15th century

The head is adorned with crystals representing the byakugō (white spiralling hair) on the forehead and the nikkei-shu (red jewel on the protrusion on top of the Buddha's head)

50 cm (h.) x 42 cm (w.) x 32 cm (D.)

Provenance:

Captain Jack Simpson

Private collection built between the 1960's and the 1970's

Price on request

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Belief in Amida as Lord of the Western Paradise rose in popularity during the late 10th century. Based primarily on the concept of salvation through faith, it was not only a religion which appealed to a broad range of people, but also a direct assertion of piety against the dogmatic and esoteric ritual of the more traditional Tendai and Shingon sects. In Amida's Western Paradise the faithful are reborn, to progress through various stages of increasing awareness until finally achieving complete enlightenment.

Images of Amida, lord of the Western Paradise, are known in Japan from as early as the seventh century. Until the eleventh century the deity was most frequently portrayed in a gesture of teaching and was worshipped primarily in memorial rituals for the deceased. However, in the last two centuries of the Heian period worshippers started to concentrate more on the Teachings Essential for Rebirth written by the Tendai monk Genshin (942-1017). The teachings describe the horrors of Buddhist hell and the glories of the Western Paradise that can be attained through nembutsu, meditation on Amida or the recitation of the deity's name.

Despite the apparent absence of formal variations in the images themselves, during the latter part of the Heian period important changes did occur in the nature of the rituals held in front of the Lord of the Western Paradise. By the twelfth century Image Halls dedicated to Amida were the ritual centres of most complexes. The function of memorial services was expanded so they benefited not only the dead, but also the living. Even rituals with no historical connection to the deity, such as the important services at the start of the New Year, were held there. Of particular significance were the novel ritual practices that were held to guarantee one's rebirth in Amida's Western Paradise. Some, such as the re-enactment of the descent of Amida, or the passing of one's last moments before death



clutching a cord attached to the hands of the deity, were entirely new whilst others, including the use of halls dedicated to Amida as temporary places of interment, reflected the fusion of more ancient practices with doctrines of rebirth.

This type of *jō-in* mudra is frequently used in Japanese Esotericism, especially in statues of the so-called Esoteric Amida. This particular one is characterised by circles formed with the thumbs and indexes and it stands for a specific rank in the Amida hierarchy.

The symbolism of the *jō-in* mudra is closely associated with the concept of complete absorption of thought by intense contemplation of a single object of meditation, in such a way that the bonds relating to the mental faculties to so-called 'real phenomena' are broken and the worshiper is thus enabled to identify himself with the Supreme Unity through a sort of super-intellectual raptus. In the *jō-in* the position of the hands is that of the adepts of yogic contemplation. Thus the *jō-in* symbolises specifically *zenjō* (ecstatic thought) for it is the gesture which indicates the suppression of all spiritual disquiet in order to arrive finally at the complete concentration on the truth.

The position of the hands in the mudra of concentration derives, in accordance with the tradition, from the attitude which the historical Buddha assumed when he devoted himself to final meditation under the Bodhi tree. This is the attitude he was found in when the demon armies of Mara attacked him. He was to alter it only when he called the earth to witness at the moment of his triumph over the demons. Consequently the position symbolises specifically the supreme mediation of the historical Buddha but also the

Buddhist qualities of tranquillity, impassivity and superiority.

The circle formed by the fingers in this figure means the perfection of the Law because the circle is the perfect form. The formation of the two circles by the two hands representing respectively the world of the Buddhas (right hand) and that of Sentient Beings (left hand) indicates that the Law conceived by the Buddha is sustained by Sentient Beings who integrate themselves into it completely. The two juxtaposed circular shapes represent the accomplishment and the perfection of Buddhist Law in its relationship to all Beings. The right-hand circle symbolises the divine law of the Buddha, the left-hand circle, the human law of the Buddha. Side by side, the circles symbolise the harmony of the two worlds, that of Sentient Beings and that of the Buddha. The fingers are entwined; those of the left hand represent the five elements of the world of Beings and those of the right hand the five elements of the world of the Buddhas.

The two circles of this type of *jō-in* mudra also stand for the two aspects of cosmic unity; the Diamond World and the Matrix World. These circles are separated from each other because they are formed by two different hands. The circles are joined in this mudra to constitute a single unity which symbolises, by the form of their juxtaposition, the double aspect of a single world and the concept of All-One, the basic principle of Esotericism.

Radio Carbon Dating Ref: RCD-8671















# 12

## AN EIGHT-FOLD PAPER SCREEN PAINTED IN INK AND COLOUR ON A GOLD LEAF GROUND DEPICTING VARIOUS FLOWERS OF THE FOUR SEASONS WITH TANZAKU (POEM SLIPS) BY KAGAWA KAGEKI (1768-1843)

Japan

Edo period

18th / 19th century

Each poem slip signed *Kageki*

119,5 cm (h.) x 405 cm (w.)

Price on request

### OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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The flowers and grasses on the screen include: *yamabuki* (kerria), *tanpopo* (dandelions), *sakuraso* (Japanese primrose), *sumire* (violet), *utsugi* (deutzias), *botan* (peonies), *kakitsubata* (irises), *nadeshiko* (pinks), *ajisai* (hydrangea), *keshi* (poppies), *kikyo* (Chinese bellflower), *hagi* (bush clover), *ominaeshi* (patrinia), *kiku* (chrysanthemums), *fuyo* (cotton rosemallow), *fujibakama* (fragrant eupatorium), *susuki* (Chinese silver grass), *shion* (aster), *rindo* (Japanese gentian), *suisen* (narcissus) and *omoto* (Japanese sacred lily).

*Tanzaku* are rectangular sheets of paper used for calligraphic poems or paintings. Since the mid-Heian and Kamakura periods, such papers, termed *shikishigata*, were inscribed with poetic calligraphy and attached to the upper portions of screens or sliding door panels. Their verses coordinated with the paintings to which they were affixed. Often these slips are highly decorated with mica or coloured patterns overlaid with gold or silver cut into small pieces or sprinkled like dust.

Kagawa Kageki (1768-1843) is a Japanese poet of *tanka* (Japanese short poems), active in late Edo period. He was born in Tottori prefecture and liked reading and calligraphy from an early age. At the age of 15 he is known to have completed the contemporary translation of *Hyakunin isshu*, a classical Japanese anthology of one hundred poets compiled by Fujiwara no Teika (1162-1241). At 26, he moved to Kyoto and was adopted by the poet Kagawa Kagemoto (1745-1821). In Kyoto, he changed his name to Kageki and served the Tokudaiji Family, one of aristocratic families of the imperial court. He attended many aristocratic *utakai* (poetry reading gathering) where participants read *tanka* poetry on a common theme in front of an



中より心を定むる事  
は、心をはかりて、  
心をはかりて、





audience. Each poem slip on this screen has a theme at the top of the sheet and it is possible that these poems were read at one such poetry meeting.

n.b There are two small repairs to the gold. One on the third panel from the left and another on the sixth panel.

1  
霞中瀧 みよしのの 滝のしら波 うらがすみ 花かともゆる 春はきにけり

**Waterfall in a mist**

White wave of  
Miyoshino waterfall  
making the bay misty,  
resembling flowers,  
the spring has come

2  
夕齡冬 夕暮れは 月もこがねの 色にでて たりかそかえせ 山吹の花

**Evening of winter**

In the evening  
the colour of the moon  
also becomes golden  
reflecting the colour  
of the *yamabuki* (golden Japanese rose)

3  
河暮春 年どしに ながるる春を 川波のかえるがえると 思いけるかな

**River of late spring**

Every year  
spring comes and goes  
like recurrent waves  
of the river  
Is this not so?

4  
貴賤更衣 我がふる かつりの絹はよき人の しら重ねより 涼しかりけり

**Changing wardrobe of a noble and a humble**

I touch  
finely woven silk  
of a noble  
it feels cooler than  
usual summer robes

5  
卯の花 我が宿の 垣根に咲ける 卯の花は あわれにしらぬ 月夜なりけり

**Utsugi (deutzias)**

Flower of *utsugi*  
blossoming under  
the hedge of my house  
would pitifully not know  
the beauty of this moonlit night

6  
?女待つほととぎす 妹とわが二人 しかむの一声を 寝たくも 惜しむ 子規かな

**Awaited hototogisu (cuckoo)**

Without sleeping  
we are waiting  
to hear *hototogisu*  
yet a song is  
still being withheld

7  
夕立 夕立は 登窓(登装・地名?)の峯(みね)に かかりけり 清たき河がいま濁るらむ

**Evening shower**

An evening shower  
has just fallen on  
the mountain peak,  
clear river  
now getting cloudy



8

題しらず 朝踏めど 露もしめらぬ 水  
無月の のづらに咲ける 月草の花

**Title unknown**

Walking  
but no dew in the field  
where *Tsukikusa* (dayflower, 'dew herb')  
flowers  
on a June morning

9

居待月(いまちづき) 思うどち 居待ち  
の月もかたむ(ぶ)きぬ いざ転年に 今  
宵あかさん

***Imachiduki (late autumn moon)***

With close friends  
even the late autumn moon  
is setting  
it is almost the end of the year  
let's stay up all night

10

松間月 一むらの 松の木の間は 照る  
月の かくれたるより うたわれにけり

***Moon amongst pines***

The moon shining  
through a pine forest,  
it is not  
something hidden  
but celebrated

11

浜月似雪 馬珠の くろどの浜に 住む  
月の なんと雪とまで 見てわたるらむ

***Moonlight on beach resembling snow***

With a horse  
crossing the Kurodo beach  
how beautiful  
illuminated by the moonlight  
resembling snow

12

先後見月 身ははしるぬ(身に走ぬ) ま  
えもきいたかく けりげり(けりにけり)  
かわらぬかのは秋夜の月

***The moon I see before and after***

I have run  
forward and upward  
over a long distance  
yet the autumn moon  
remains unchanged

13

月夜聴松風 照る月は 高く離れて あらし  
のみ おりおり松に さわるよわかな

***Listening to the wind in the moonlit pines***

The night with the moon  
shining so high above the sky  
only the strong winds  
touch the pines  
now and then

14

樵路時雨 山人の ゆうべの道や たどる  
らむ かへるがへるも 峰・しぐれかな

***A late-autumn shower in a mountain track***

In late-autumn evenings  
a hermit in a mountain  
making his way home  
gets caught in a shower  
again and again

15

残菊馴雪 昨日まで先とぬ色にみしもの  
を 雪をいただく白菊の花

***Remaining chrysanthemums, fitting snow***

Until yesterday  
colour was not there,  
today is different  
snow-crowned  
white chrysanthemums



16

題しらず 家路まで 送らん月の 影ながら  
わかれて帰る 心地が薄れ

***Title unknown***

The moonlight  
illuminates as if  
it escorted me home,  
healing my pain  
for parting from you

17

冬獣 時しもあれ 雪おおてみて いか  
り獲物の たける狩場に にこ(ご)れなり

***Winter beasts***

Now of all times  
the hunting field  
in deep snow  
beaten by raising beasts  
freezes firmly

18

題しらず 杣川に おろすいかだの い  
かにして かわかり道は くだりはてけ  
ん

***Title unknown***

Logs rafted  
down the river  
I wonder, how  
each journey  
will end?

19

夜過関屋 木幡山 ふけたる月に せき  
もりの ゆづるつな引 おときこゆなり

***Passing a checkpoint in the night***

In Kohatayama  
against the setting moon  
the sound of bows  
drawn by a barrier keeper  
as a charm against evil"















# 13

## A JAPANESE EXPORT LACQUER PLAQUE DEPICTING THE PALACE OF VERSAILLES ATTRIBUTED TO THE SASAYA WORKSHOP

Nagasaki, Japan

Circa 1788

Lacquered on copper ground,  
decorated in gold *hiramaki-e* and  
silver *togidashi-e*, inscribed to the  
reverse *Vue de Versailles* .

16 cm (h.) x 28,5 cm (w.)

Provenance:

By repute, commissioned by Johan  
Frederik, Baron van Reede tot de  
Parkeler (1757-1802) 1788

Barend Groen Antiquaire,  
Amsterdam (1966)

G. de Boer, Amsterdam

Purchased by the previous owner  
from a dealer in London

Price on request

### OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Zebregs&Röell

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www.zebregroell.com

On the back of the small painting frame in which this plaque was framed, the name of Baron Van Reede tot de Parkeler was inscribed. In the archives of the Freemasons, this man is recorded as a frequenter of prostitutes. In the lodge archive, it states:

*Ziende men hem in de Bijbel leezen, en bidden, in het midden van een dozijn Maccassarasche en Javaansche hoeren die hem tot wulpsheid aanlokten.*

Which translates to: 'We saw him reading the Bible and praying, in the midst of a dozen Maccassara and Javanese whores who tempted him to lasciviousness.'

Japanese lacquer panels featuring European prints and drawings began to emerge in the late 18th century. Many were produced in Nagasaki, commissioned by directors of the Dutch East India Company (VOC), including Commander Isaac Titsingh, who served as Opperhoofd (the chief commercial representative of the VOC in Japan) in 1780 and again from 1782 to 1784, and Johan Frederik Baron van Reede tot de Parkeler (1757-1802), who held the same position in 1786 and 1788-89. Due to Japan's strict isolationist policy (*Sakoku*) under the Tokugawa shogunate, the VOC operated under special exemption within the confines of their trading post in Deshima, giving them the exclusive ability to commission Japanese artworks such as these lacquer panels. In 1793, Baron van Reede tot de Parkeler sent a collection of Japanese objects to his father in the Netherlands, including, as described in a detailed list and accompanying letter, "two oval portraits or busts of Frederick the Great, one lacquered in colors and the other inlaid...".

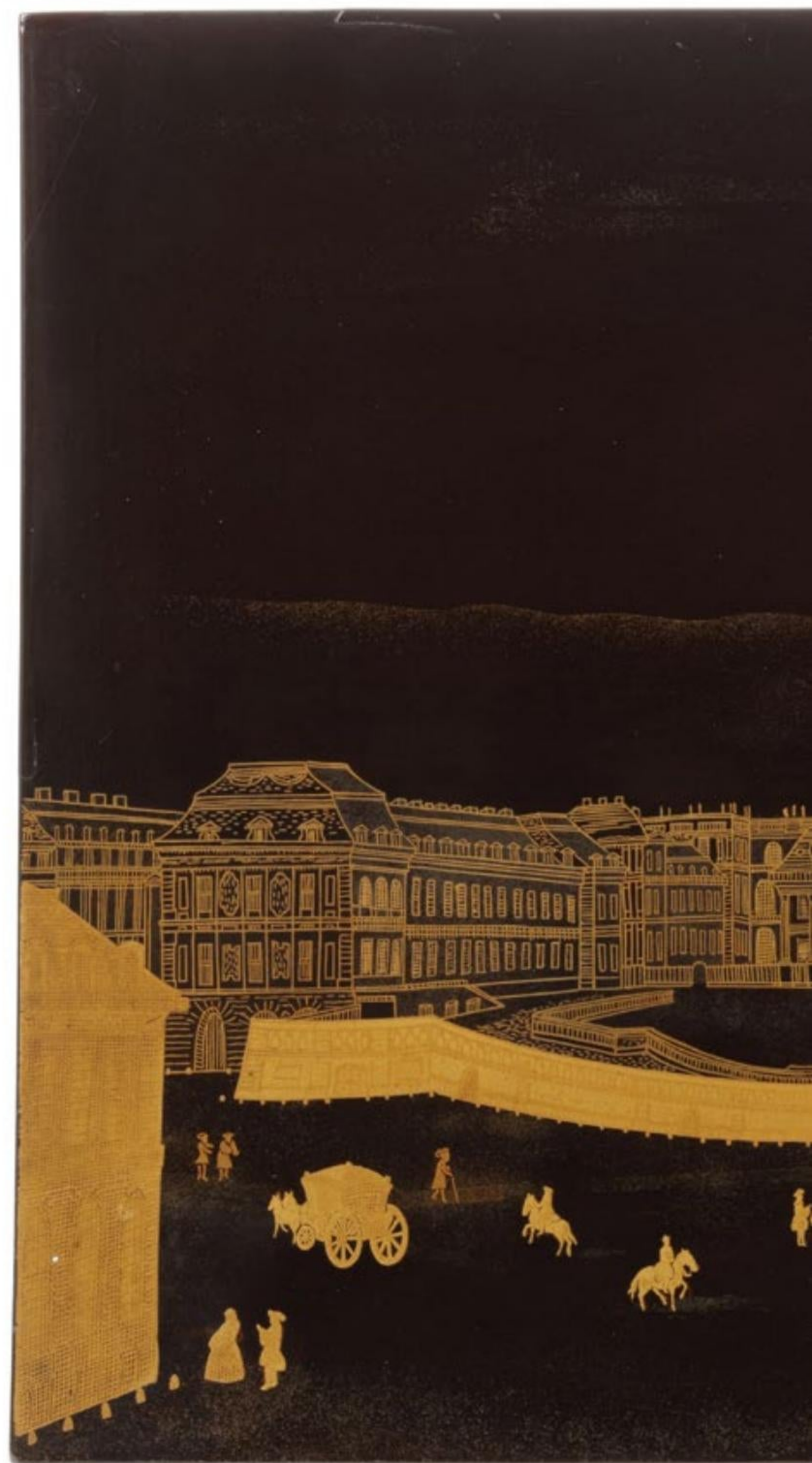






Beyond portrait plaques, topographical views of European and Oriental subjects were also produced, often based on printed engravings. These included landscapes, naval battles, and marine scenes. A notable series commissioned by Baron Reede in 1788 featured views of Rome, including St. Peter's Basilica, the Trevi Fountain, the Spanish Steps, and various palaces and churches. These panels were inscribed on the reverse with place names in script, similar to the present view of Versailles (illustrated in O. Impey & C. Jörg, *Japanese Export Lacquer 1580-1850*, Amsterdam, 2005, pp. 52-54, figs. 67-78). One example depicting the Palazzo Corsini, is now housed in the Tokyo National Museum.

A set of four large lacquer panels (each approx. 37 × 53 cm), depicting the Battle of Dogger Bank (5 August 1781), was based on a series of engravings by Frederik Murat and Matthias Sallie published in 1782. These panels were produced in 1792, signed 'Sasaya', and are now part of the Rijksmuseum collection in Amsterdam (NG-NM-6308, 6309, 6310, 6311). Two additional panels in the Rijksmuseum, also signed 'Sasaya' and dated 1792, depict Ancient Rome, each inscribed with "*ROME in its Original Splendour*" and "*ROME DANS Sa Splendeur Ancienne*" (BK-1960-29-A and B). Based on these examples, the Versailles panel can likely be attributed to the lacquer producer Sasaya. Rather than a lacquer artist himself, Sasaya was believed to be a businessman or workshop manager, overseeing commissions from Dutch clients such as van Reede and subcontracting woodworkers, lacquer artisans, and inlay specialists to complete the intricate joinery, lacquering, and pearl inlay work. Initially based in Kyoto, he later possibly relocated most of his operations to Nagasaki.













# 14

## BAZ BAHADUR AND RUPMATI RIDING AT NIGHT

Mughal, probably Awadh, India  
Circa 1800

Opaque watercolor heightened with  
gold on paper

Image: 19,7 cm x 25,7 cm

Folio: 21,2 cm x 27,6 cm

Provenance:

The Ehrenfeld collection, California  
Sotheby's New York, 6 October 1990,  
lot 19

Carlton Rochell Asian Art, New York  
The Sterling collection, U.S., 2011

Publication:

Daniel J. Ehnborn, *Indian Miniatures:*  
The Ehrenfeld collection, New York,  
1985, no. 30, pp. 76-77

Price on request

### OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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Baz Bahadur of Mandu, the last King of the Malwa Sultanate (r. 1555-1562), is depicted here riding with his beloved Rupmati on a pair of horses. They gallop in sync through the darkened night landscape, rearing up in perfect unison as the lovers gaze into each other's eyes. They seem to glow with an otherworldly radiance, their energy illuminating the green bush behind them like a spotlight stage. A lotus-filled pond with a pair of birds bathing is depicted below.

Although the Muslim Baz Bahadur and the Hindu Rupmati were historical figures who lived and loved during the reign of the Mughal Emperor Akbar, their inspiring story has transcended into folklore and poetry. Baz Bahadur was initially led to Rupmati by music he heard on a hunt. After years of palatial and romantic bliss, the two were divided by the 1661 Mughal conquest of Mandu, whereupon Rupmati chose death over being taken captive. Thus, they are the archetypal tragic lovers—an Indian version of Romeo and Juliet—and are represented here in this stunning miniature as idealized types, raised to heroic perfection.

While it is apparent that these are not actual portraits, we can nevertheless immediately recognize them as Baz and Rupmati with the help of longstanding visual conventions associated with their story: Baz Bahadur bears a long spear, two quivers of arrows, a bow, and a sword. Their eyes meet as their caparisoned horses lift them in a united stride.











15

## KRISHNA AND THE SERPENT KALIYA

Madhya Pradesh state, India  
Kingdom of Datia

Circa 1800

Gouache heightened with gold on  
prepared paper

35,5 cm x 27,9 cm

Provenance:

Park Avenue collection, acquired  
throughout the 1970s and 1980s

Sotheby's New York, 19 May 1982,

Islamic Works of Art, Lot 13

Price on request

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Created in the former kingdom of Datia around 1800, this painting depicts a pivotal episode from the *Bhagavata Purana* in which Krishna subdues the serpent king Kaliya, a multi-headed serpent (*naga*) seen on the lower right of piece. The scene unfolds along the banks of the Yamuna River, where Kaliya's venom had poisoned the waters, endangering the health and lives of the region's inhabitants. In response, Krishna leaps into the river to challenge the serpent's many hoods, asserting his divine authority. The wives of Kaliya, depicted with serpent-like lower bodies on the upper left, beseech Krishna for mercy as they recognize his supreme power. Their pleas are met with compassion, and Krishna spares Kaliya, restoring purity to the river and harmony to the land.

The composition is rich in narrative details, with expressive figures and inscriptions, verdant landscapes, and divine beings observing the event from above. Executed in vibrant gouache with gold highlights, this work exemplifies the refined artistic tradition of Madhya Pradesh, blending dynamic movement with meticulous detail to convey Krishna's role as both a protector and a divine force of balance.

Compare this artwork to two similar depictions of the scene: one nearly identical example in the Asian Art Museum's collection, *The Encounter Between the Hindu God Krishna and the Serpent Kaliya*, from a manuscript of the *Bhagavata Purana* (Object No. 2005.64.39), and an alternate representation in the Harvard Art Museum's collection, *Krishna Quells the Serpent Kaliya* (Painting, Recto), an illustration from the *Bhagavata Purana* (Object No. 1974.112).



देवताञ्चरिचदेष्टाह



नागराजनीञ्चसुत  
करा



गोप

नागपुत्र











16

**LARGE FLAT-CUT  
DIAMOND RING**

South India

19th century

Size: US 6,5

Price on request

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

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17

**A LARGE GILT BRONZE  
PRIEST'S RING**

Bali, Indonesia  
19th century  
Tiger's eye and rubies  
Size: US10  
Price on request

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

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